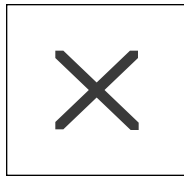


ANIMAL RIGHTS ACTIVIST

Animals have as much right to live as humans do. It is wrong for humans to kill animals for their own purposes and to replace their habitats with shopping malls, subdivisions, and roads. **Red** wolves are a prime example of how humans can destroy an entire species. **Red** wolves were rescued only after having been pushed to the brink of extinction by humans. The future of this animal is still in jeopardy. It is time for us humans to reconsider our place in the scheme of life on earth. In the case of **red** wolves, humans should find ways to coexist with these magnificent predators. No animal except man has ever caused the artificial extinction of hundreds of species by exploiting plants and animals and their habitats. It is time to halt this destructive process and, as Thoreau and others suggested, to work out some relation to wildness.



THE RED WOLF

"I am a hunter's hunter, my track a sign of hope, its absence a warning." Christopher Camuto

I was here long before settlers came from across the seas. I am Wa'ya to the Cherokee, principal clan animal to the Ani'-Wa'ya, the Wolf people. I am a provider, a loyal mate, a devoted parent. I am responsible for my pups and for making sure they know how to hunt in order to survive. I am a carnivore. I depend on deer and small mammals to live. We **red** wolves have evolved over thousands of years with our prey. We have to kill to live. We have no other food source. Successful hunting is hard and dangerous. We have never caused the extinction of another species. We are blamed for declines in prey populations, but that is an unfair accusation. We would never cause our own extinction by eliminating our food source. Every healthy ecosystem needs summit predators. Our role is vital.

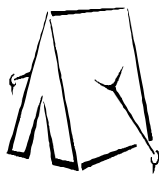
THE LOCAL RESIDENT

Many of us have lived in this area for generations. We don't farm, but we own small businesses. Many of us see no reason to reintroduce an animal that has not lived here for many years. We worry that an endangered species means property restrictions. What if a **red** wolf pack takes up residence on the twenty acres I own in the park? Could I build a cabin if a wolf pack has a den there? It is against the law to kill an endangered animal. But what if I need to protect my children and pets? I am not clear on how the law works in that case. I don't hate wolves, and I don't believe that fairy tale stuff. But I don't think **red** wolves belong here. They belong in an area where there are fewer people. What if wolves lose their fear of people because they are protected? Would little kids be in danger? How would their numbers be controlled? Would the state be responsible? Private citizens?



ENVIRONMENTALIST NATURALIST

Top predators are essential to a healthy ecosystem. **Red** wolves play an important role in a well-balanced ecosystem. Too many ungulates such as white-tailed deer cause extensive damage to vegetation, and even with the hunting season, some hard winters, and natural mortality, their numbers are increasing. We need **red** wolves for the natural control of the deer and to ensure that the strongest and healthiest animals survive to breed. **Red** wolves generally do not kill livestock as long as their natural prey is plentiful. Coyotes sometimes kill livestock, and although coyotes are surprisingly scarce in this area, their numbers could increase in the absence of a top predator. One reason we are considering High Pines for **red** wolf recovery is the absence of large numbers of coyotes. This factor could help **red** wolves recover in the wild without the danger of being hybridized out of existence. Here is a chance for humans to do something positive to help an endangered animal!



VISITOR HIKER CAMPER

I live in the city, but my family and I come here every year to enjoy the outdoors. We want our children to experience nature and wildlife, and that includes hearing **red** wolves howl and finding tracks - maybe even seeing them. We hear conflicting information about whether or not **red** wolves could be dangerous to humans. We need accurate information. We plan to teach our children responsible behavior toward all wildlife, and we think public education is necessary so we don't have a situation like we sometimes have with bears where they have to be destroyed because they become nuisances around campsites because people leave food around. We would hate to see the same thing happen with wolves. We need to work on public education. educationn.about wildlife.

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT OFFICIALS

Everyone wants wild areas and wildlife for some personal or economic reason. We are trying to find a balance here between the demands for recreation, solitude, wildlife habitat, and jobs. The truth is, there is something for everyone - including the **red** wolf. What needs to happen is for everyone to compromise. People can't just be out for themselves and their personal interests any longer. We have to look at the big picture together, and maybe we will all have to adjust our thinking about what's important. Maybe farmers can re-think their livestock-raising practices. Maybe hunters will see the health of the deer herds improve with a top predator around. Maybe hikers can hear the howl of a wolf. Maybe, just maybe, we will ALL benefit from the return of the **red** wolf.

